

# New Castle Steel Company

## EPA Region 3

Delaware  
New Castle County  
Near the Delaware  
River in the City of  
New Castle

**EPA ID#** DED980705255 **Last Update:**  
August 2002

**1st Congressional District** **Other Names:**  
Deemer Steel Company

## Current Site Status

The site, two disposal areas, is no longer considered a risk to human health or the environment. It was deleted from the National Priorities List (NPL) on March 17, 1989. EPA conducted a Five-Year Review of conditions at the site in 2001 and the review showed that the site is protective of human health and the environment. However, the Record of Decision (ROD), signed in March of 1988, stated that the two disposal areas would be capped according to the requirements of Delaware's Solid Waste Regulations. To date, one area has been capped. DNREC is working with the owner to cap the second disposal area and will conduct additional sampling this summer. If the second disposal area is not capped by December 2005, then EPA will conduct another Five-Year Review no later than June 2006.

## Site Description

The New Castle Steel Site, located near the Delaware River in New Castle, Delaware, is a 3-acre landfill which received foundry wastes from the Deemer Steel Company from 1907 until 1987. The waste consisted of black sands, slag, coke, iron oxide scale, fine sand dust, and metal scrap. In 1955, an electric furnace was put into operation, and in 1973, a baghouse system was installed to control dust emissions from the furnace. Dust from the baghouse was mixed with black sand and spread over the disposal area from 1973 until 1980. In 1980, the plant began to recycle the dust and continued this practice until the plant closed in 1987. In 1980, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations classified baghouse dust as a hazardous waste because of unacceptable levels of cadmium, chromium, and lead. Consequently, the site was placed on the NPL in 1982 because the baghouse dust could potentially cause groundwater contamination. At the time the site was listed, more than 5,000 people lived within one mile of the site.

Shortly after the site was placed on the NPL, EPA determined that baghouse dust did not pose a serious health threat, and therefore, it was no longer classified as a hazardous waste. Although metals associated with the site (arsenic, chromium, lead, cadmium, and nickel) have entered soils, sediments, surface water, and groundwater, EPA and the State conducted studies that determined that the contamination levels at the site did not rise to levels that were threatening to human health or the environment and did not require cleanup actions.

### **Site Responsibility**

This site was the responsibility of federal and state governments, and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.

### **NPL Listing History**

This site was proposed to the National Priorities List of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites requiring long term remedial action on December 30, 1982. The site was formally added to the list September 8, 1983, making it eligible for federal cleanup funds.

## **Threats and Contaminants**

The groundwater, sediments, soil, and surface water were

contaminated with low levels of heavy metals including arsenic, chromium, lead, cadmium, and nickel from the wastes disposed of on site. However, the low contamination levels were within acceptable health-based drinking water standards, and EPA determined that they did not pose threats to nearby residents or the environment.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

## Cleanup Progress

After years of data collection and study, including an extensive investigation undertaken by the Deemer Steel Company, both EPA and the State determined that this site does not constitute a threat to human health or the environment. It was, therefore, determined that no cleanup actions were required at the site under the law governing the Superfund program. However, the Record of Decision (ROD), signed in March of 1988, stated that the two disposal areas would be capped according to the requirements of Delaware's Solid Waste Regulations. To date, one area has been capped. The site was deleted from the NPL in March of 1989. EPA conducted a Five-Year Review of conditions at the site and the review showed that the site is protective of human health and the environment. DNREC is working with the owner to cap the second disposal area and will conduct additional sampling this summer. If the second disposal area is not capped by December 2005, then EPA will conduct another Five-Year Review no later than June 2006.

## Contacts

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